



Capitol News!

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Dear Susan,

Welcome to the first edition of 2014 *Capitol News!* In this issue you will find information relating to the Omnibus Budget bill signed by President Obama last Friday, which provides funding to federal programs through this fiscal year ending September 30, 2014. Meanwhile, Rebeccah (Becky) Wolfkiel, NASHIA Government Relations, continues to work with Congressional leaders and TBI stakeholders in moving the TBI Reauthorization Act forward, hopefully to be considered by the full House of Representatives soon.

NASHIA and other TBI stakeholders are working with the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force on the Awareness Day activities scheduled for Wednesday, March 12, 2014. As in the past, the Fair will be held in the Rayburn House Office Building, First Floor Foyer. This year's briefing will focus on employment and return to work for civilians and returning servicemembers/veterans with TBI. Further information will be forthcoming on the day's events. Becky is planning to organize Hill visits with key Senators to get the bill introduced in the senate. If you are planning to attend, please let her know and she will arrange the meeting with your senators and accompany you and any others in your state attending the day's events. Packets will be prepared with information for you to share on TBI and the TBI Act programs. Please do not hesitate to e-mail her at rwolfkiel@ridgepolicygroup.com

Meanwhile, to access public policy information, including the NASHIA Public Policy brochure for the 113th Congress, Second Session, go to the NASHIA website: www.nashia.org

This Week in Congress

Having passed the appropriations bill to continue funding for the remainder of this fiscal year, Congress is in recess this week and will return to the Capitol January 27th.



Appropriations

President Signs FY 2014 Appropriations Bill

Last Friday, President Obama signed the \$1.1 trillion omnibus spending bill to fund federal government through September 30, 2014. Congress passed the bill in accordance with budget guidelines established last month, which will mitigate sequestration (across the board cuts) for FY

2014 and FY 2015. Funding for the Labor-HHS-Education bill was reduced overall by \$100 billion below the FY 2013 enacted level. The bill continues funding for most of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) programs, but reduces funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund and cuts \$10 million from the Independent Payment Advisory Board, which is to find ways to reduce Medicare spending.

The bill includes a total of \$6.8 billion for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an increase of \$568 million over the FY 2013 funding level. This funding includes CDC's budget authority, and transfers from the Public Health Service Act, the Prevention and Public Health Fund, and the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund. It also includes a total program level funding of \$142.3 million for CDC's Injury Prevention activities, an increase of almost \$11.8 million over the FY 2013 post-sequestration level and \$4.6 million above the FY 2012 level. Bill highlights:

- "All Other Intentional Injury" and the "All Other Unintentional Injury" budget lines have been combined to become the "Injury Prevention Activities" budget line, funded at \$26.5 million. This "Injury Prevention Activities" budget line includes \$2.5 million increase over 2013 post-sequestration comparable levels.
- \$7.9 million over the FY 2013 post-sequestration level for the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) to expand the system beyond the current 18 states. Total funding for NVDRS will be \$11.2 million.
- Small funding increases for several Injury Prevention and Control budget lines.
- Injury Control Research Centers and the Older Adults Falls lines are level with FY 2013 post-sequestration levels.

Also of note, the bill includes:

- \$160 million (from the Prevention and Public Health Fund) for the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant which many states use to conduct injury and violence prevention activities.
- \$380 million for Business Services Support/Working Capital Fund (WCF), \$14.7 million below FY 2012. This line will be used to implement the Working Capital Fund to achieve greater efficiency and transparency of business support services (BSS). The 2014 budget distributes a portion of the BSS appropriation to Injury Prevention and Control budget based on the program's historical business service consumption. More information on the WCF can be found on <http://intranet.cdc.gov/wcf/wcf-about.html#authorizing-legislation>.

Other Legislation

Senate Committee Fails to Ratify UN Disability Treaty

On December 20th, 2013, U.S. Senator Bob Corker, (R-TN), Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, announced he cannot support Senate approval of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), citing concerns that U.S. ratification could undermine the Constitutional balance between the state and federal governments and the legitimacy of our democratic processes. Sen. Corker urged the U.S. to pursue different means of advocating for the rights of the disabled throughout the world.

Advocates are calling on supporters to contact their senators, particularly if they are members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to support this treaty. A wide range of business groups, organizations, including veterans and disability groups support this all important treaty. In November, the Senate Committee held two public hearings to hear testimony from proponents and

opponents.

On Tuesday, January 28th, a national conference call is scheduled at 1 pm (ET) to discuss strategies for further negotiations on getting the treaty ratified by the U.S. Senate. [Click here to register.](#)

TBI Act Reauthorization Advances

The House Energy and Commerce Committee marked up the TBI Reauthorization Act, H.R. 1098, in November and the bill has been sent to the House Majority Leader to be scheduled for debate/vote by the full House. In the Senate, Senators Bob Casey (D-PA) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) have agreed to sponsor a senate version. However, a bill has yet to be introduced. Becky Wolfkiel and TBI stakeholders have been working with senate sponsor staff and HELP Committee staff to obtain consensus for a senate bill.

CBITF Chairs Introduce ConTACT Act

In September, Congressional Brain Injury Task Force co-chairs, Reps. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ) and Tom Rooney (R-FL) introduced the Concussion Treatment and Care Tools Act of 2013 or ConTACT Act of 2013, H.R. 3113. The legislation amends the Public Health Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish guidelines for states on the implementation of best practices for diagnosis, treatment, and management of mild TBIs (concussions) in school-aged children, including best practices relating to student athletes returning to play after an MTBI. The bill has been referred to the House Subcommittee on Health. Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) introduced similar legislation, S. 1516, also in September.

Representative Introduces Return to Work Awareness Act

In October, Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH) introduced H.R. 3351, Return to Work Awareness Act of 2013, authorizing the Secretary of Labor, through the Job Accommodation Network, to disseminate information and promote awareness among survivors of stroke and other debilitating health occurrences, such as TBI, and survivors' families, as well as among employers, government agencies, employee representatives, and service providers in order to: (1) assist survivors of stroke, TBI and other debilitating health occurrences in returning to work, (2) improve a survivor's employability and demonstrate to employers ways to capitalize on the value and talent that survivors add to the workplace, and (3) enhance self-employment and entrepreneurship options for survivors.

This update was prepared by:

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The National Association of State Head Injury Administrators assists State government in promoting partnerships and building systems to meet the needs of individuals with brain injuries and their families.

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